

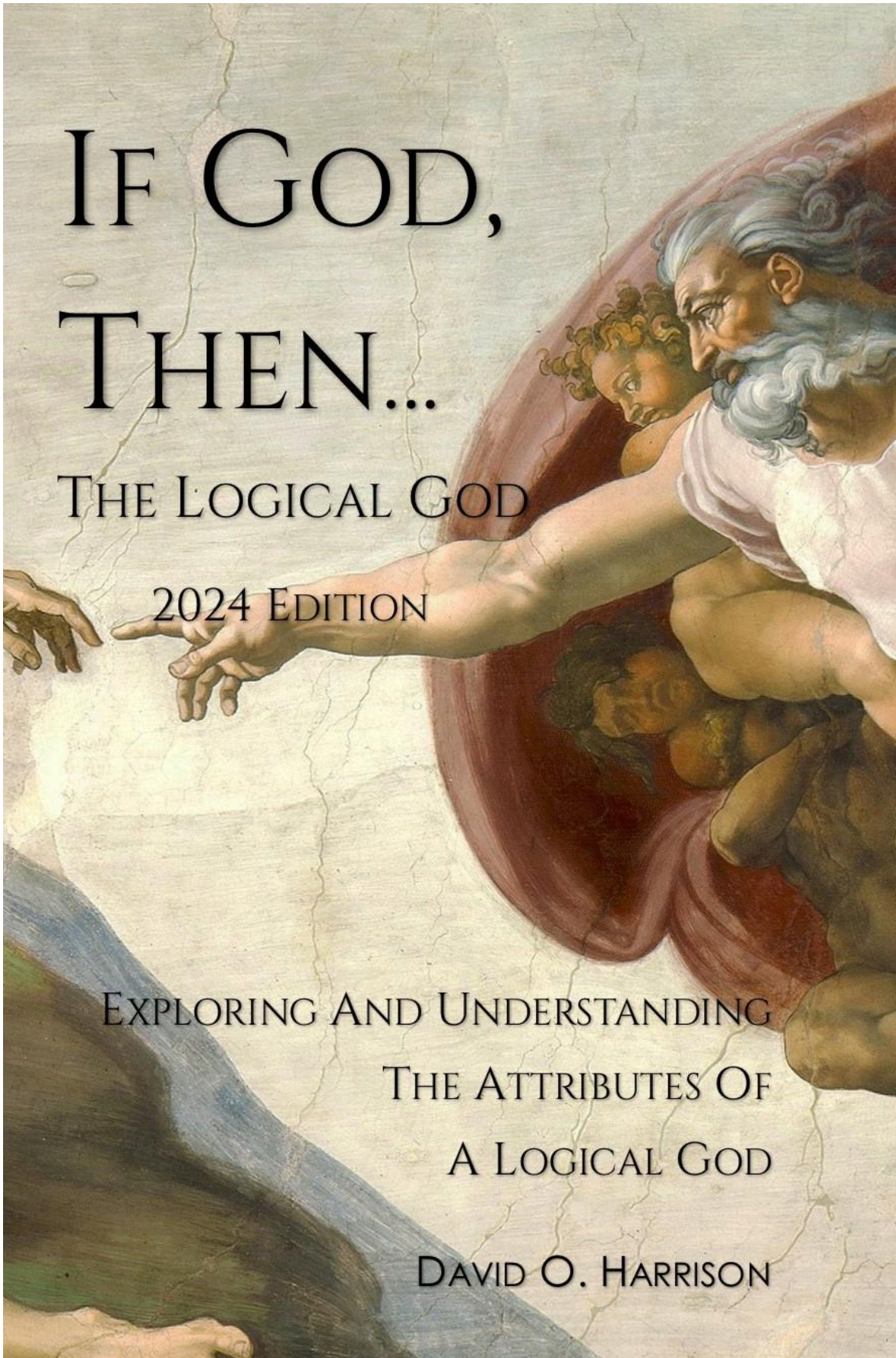
IF GOD, THEN...

THE LOGICAL GOD

2024 EDITION

EXPLORING AND UNDERSTANDING
THE ATTRIBUTES OF
A LOGICAL GOD

DAVID O. HARRISON





David Harrison was born and raised in England and emigrated to Canada in 1973 at the age of 21. David became a Christ-follower at the age of 35. For 23-years David ran a successful audiovisual company in Toronto. In 2006 David founded Bus Stop Bible Studies, a ministry which used public transit advertising panels to display messages of encouragement to many millions of people in Canada.



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David Harrison was born and raised in England and emigrated to Canada in 1973 when he was twenty-one.

At thirty-five, David became a Christ-follower. He is married and the father of two adult children. He attended a Brethren Bible Chapel in Scarborough for twenty-five years, ten as an elder.

For twenty-three years, David ran a successful audiovisual integration company in Toronto, Canada.

In 2006 David founded Bus Stop Bible Studies. This ministry used public transit advertising panels to display messages of encouragement from the Word of God to millions of people across Canada.

David was the Board Chair of Daystar Native Christian Outreach, based on Manitoulin Island, for ten years.

Now 'retired,' David and his wife, Wendy, run a Bed & Breakfast in Muskoka, and David has taken to writing as a hobby.

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The most fundamental question of our time must be,
“Why do I believe what I believe?”

One must ask oneself, “Is what I believe based on fact, truth and logic, or is what I believe based on ignorance of facts, emotion and relativity?”

Why do *you* believe what you believe?

"O God, you have taught me from my earliest childhood, and I constantly tell others about the wonderful things you do. Now that I am old and grey, do not abandon me, O God. Let me proclaim your power to this new generation, your mighty miracles to all who come after me."

Psalm 71:17-18 NLT

CHAPTER 0 — ALL JOURNEYS HAVE A BEGINNING

Perhaps, one of the greatest stumbling blocks concerning the reality of God is *willful ignorance*.

The psalmist wrote,

The fool¹ has said in his heart, "There is no God."

Psalm 14:1

I was that fool.

If, after the famous incident of an apple falling on his head, Isaac Newton had simply brushed it off and failed to use his remarkable intellect and reasoning abilities to explore the question, "Why did the apple fall?", we could, knowing what we know now, rightly have labeled him as foolish.

Willful ignorance—choosing not to investigate the reality of God—leaves one vulnerable to deception. The psalmist urges us to understand that the knowledge of God is of such profound

¹ *Fool*: A silly or stupid person; a person who lacks judgment or sense. A person who has been tricked or deceived into appearing or acting silly or stupid. dictionary.com/browse/fool

personal importance that ignoring Him or neglecting to invest time, effort, and emotion in seeking Him is the height of foolishness.

My earnest prayer is that as you journey through this book, you will come to realize that intimate knowledge of God is both possible and logical — certainly not foolish!

Back in the late 70s, I used to own a small cottage on Brandy Lake in the spectacularly beautiful region of Muskoka, Ontario. I had invited a business acquaintance to bring his wife and two young boys to the cottage one summer weekend. Jurgen told me, when I made the invitation, that he and his family were Christians. I thought nothing of it.

Once the two boys were snuggly in bed, the three of us sat around enjoying a cup of tea and conversation. As eager new Christians, the two of them quickly brought the conversation around to things of a spiritual nature.

I should make it clear, though a professing atheist at the time, I enjoyed a good debate and could easily take either side of the argument as to whether God existed or not.

At some point during our conversation, Jurgen's wife, Gabriella, got up and went into the bedroom to grab her Bible. The

immediate thought that went through my mind when she walked out, Bible in hand, was, “Aha, the crutch!”²

I contend that if one cannot provide a solid rationale for the existence of God without using the Bible, then one doesn’t have much of a case and can’t expect to convince others if one’s only argument is, “Because the Bible says...” Indeed, the Bible itself teaches³, ‘You don’t need the Bible to prove God.’ (In this book, I assume there is only one God.)

Ultimately, Jurgen and Gabriella, and I should add their now three children, finally convinced me that God does exist, and they did it by simply living out their lives, revealing their intimate relationship with God, not by anything the Bible might specifically have had to say. I am eternally indebted to them.

Does this testimony mean I should never reference the Bible in this book? I don’t think so. The Bible is a primary historical document; it was the first printed book using movable type⁴ and it is still the most widely distributed book the world today⁵. In this book, I hope I will not fall into the ploy of using the Bible as a crutch to provide a valid, logical argument for the existence of God.

² Someone pointed out that a crutch can be a very useful and versatile tool in life, especially when one needs practical support.

³ The Bible — Romans 1:20

⁴ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannes_Gutenberg

⁵ guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/best-selling-book-of-non-fiction

When might it be appropriate to use or quote the Bible? One of the topics examined is, 'If God exists, then what would He be like?' What would be His attributes? E.g., would one ever consider that God is logical and acts logically? Why not take a minute or two, right now, and try and compile a list of God's attributes, what you would expect Him to be like should He exist? I can almost guarantee that referencing the Bible will produce a list two or three times longer than most people's attempts.

Where else might it be appropriate to include non-crutch statements from the Bible?

1. As in the next chapter, I quote a brief passage simply because it agrees with my personal experience. It illustrates that my experiences and the Bible are complementary, not contradictory.
2. Similarly, when the Bible makes a statement that would be considered valid – by most anyway – that conveys my thoughts or ideas concisely and articulately.
3. When the Bible offers *scientific evidence* that cannot be found outside of the Bible, specifically the statistical proof of *Very Large Numbers*.
4. When the Bible asks the very questions that we need to be able to answer, e.g., "*What is truth?*"
5. And when the Bible, Jesus specifically, offers us words of wisdom that help us understand the human condition.

The purpose of this book is two-fold. First, I desire to provide rational, logical arguments for God's existence and explanations of His character and attributes to those questioning. Second, I

hope this book will give practical encouragement to those who already have a personal relationship with the living God and that it can be a helpful resource when answering questions of those searching for meaning in their life.

If one is curious about the existence of God one does not need to leave one's brain on the doorstep. As we will discover in CHAPTER 2, BELIEF, FAITH, CERTAINTY AND KNOWLEDGE, one should not equate a rational belief in God with unicorns and tooth-fairies. That would be illogical!

So, what is an attribute? The Cambridge Dictionary describes an *attribute* as: "a quality or feature of a person or thing, esp. one that is an important part of its nature."⁶

When we consider the attributes of God, we are trying to understand the very nature of God — an impossibility for mere mortals. The nature of God is so far beyond human comprehension all we can do is hope to grasp those parts of His character and personality that He reveals to us. For me, there are four points of reference — first, that which God has revealed to me personally — His demonstrable love and affection; second, the intimacy of His Spirit; third, His Creation; and fourth, His character and nature as revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

While I have included personal experiences to illustrate the intimacy of the God I so cherish, one of the main objectives of this book is to focus on the third point of reference, the God we see in nature. The God *everyone* can see — if they so wish.

⁶ dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/attribute

In trying to ensure that I do not err by making egregious errors in logic or hiding falsehoods in the arguments I present, I approached a self-described atheist, Barry Goldberg⁷, to see if he would review a draft copy and highlight any mistakes in reasoning I might have made. He declined to conduct a review, but he kindly sent me a list of pitfalls to avoid and definitions that need to be clearly articulated:

- Do not present logical arguments divorced from actual evidence.
- Do not define terms to your advantage.
- Make the proper assumptions (I have endeavoured to avoid assumptions altogether).
- Avoid carefully chosen definitions and assumptions that may or may not be warranted.
- Be noticeably clear, up front, exactly what your definition of “God” is⁸.
- If you cannot connect the dots between whatever “God” you think you can prove and any actual deity worshiped by anybody throughout history (*i.e.*, a deity anybody cares about), then be upfront about that fact as well so

⁷ Barry Goldberg is Lead Technical Writer for a Medical Software Co., philosopher, atheist, and holds a Juris Doctor degree.

⁸ The entirety of this book focuses on the person of God and who He is.

people do not get disappointed when they get to the end and think you have moved the goalposts⁹ on them.

Barry concluded, “It might not be as exciting as being the first person in 2000 years to prove that the Christian God exists, but you will at least get points for being honest about your claims.”

The first person in 2000 years? I do love a challenge!

Honesty? Truth? Is that not what each of us is ultimately seeking? Barry’s caution not to use assumptions or logical fallacies led me to another website, *logicallyfallacious.com*¹⁰, which comprises the most comprehensive list of logical fallacies I have come across.

Pertinent selections of logical fallacies can be found in APPENDIX 3. I hope you will find me “Not guilty.” on all counts. Likewise, if one has counterarguments to that which is presented, can they be stated logically and without resorting to circular reasoning or logical fallacies?

While we are on the subject of ‘connecting the dots,’ does the Bible prove that God exists? No, it does not, but what the Bible does do is:

- Reveal the mind of God (the God of the Bible).
- Provide a list of historical events where God is seen to *interfere* with humankind and nature, and present eyewitness accounts of many of those events.

⁹ Ref. Appendix 3, Logical Fallacies — *Moving the goalposts*

¹⁰ logicallyfallacious.com/logicalfallacies/search

- Accurately predict what will happen in the future (prophecy).
- Encourage humanity to seek out God so that they can know Him personally.
- Explain why humanity has no reason for not knowing God.
- Explain the barriers that exist between God and man and how to resolve them.
- Demonstrates the free will of humanity and the consequences of abusing our free will.

I thank Barry for challenging me to set the bar high and several other atheists who have provided constructive points of reasoning for me to follow.

If God does exist, why don't I have a relationship with Him?

While the Bible cannot prove God exists, it is a book that enables people to find God. For those genuinely looking, even skeptically, the Bible is a Book of Answers. But, to the cynic, it is, and will forever remain, a nonsensical book of *supposed* contradictions, myths, and superstitions.

Can anyone prove that God exists? I will leave you to ponder that question as you read on. Can evidence be found and presented that would lead one to conclude there is a God? Absolutely.

As we set out on our journey, it is appropriate that we should be asking the right question(s). Logically, if I can prove that God exists, a new set of questions must be asked and answered.

The first question one will need to answer is, “If God does exist, why don’t I have a relationship with Him?”

There could be myriad reasons for the existence of a broken relationship with God, there are two that initially come to mind, but the only reason that has no basis in fact is, “Because there is no God.”

The first is that one might be angry with God. Anger can be perfectly rational, even if it is an undesirable or misguided contributor to a broken relationship. Anger can be redirected. Anger can be overcome, and grievances absolved. I believe God would say to us, “I can handle you being angry with me. You and I can talk about it and reason it through. What I cannot tolerate are apathy and cynicism; they are an abomination.¹¹ Give me your anger any day!”

You may be intimate with anger in a different relationship. You may be angry with your spouse, parent, child, or business partner. Separation may be a consequence of that anger, but it does not mean the other person does not exist. We can also argue that no matter how broken a relationship might be, as long as one has breath, there is always a possibility of restoration—no matter how remote it might seem in the moment. I will not speculate on the root cause of anger one might have towards God, but I do know that if one lets Him,

¹¹ Abomination: detestation, loathing, hatred, aversion, antipathy, revulsion, repugnance, abhorrence, odium, execration, disgust, horror, hostility.

God will help that person work it out. I know firsthand that God is an expert at fixing other broken relationships also.

The second reason for a broken relationship with God is pride. Pride is a small word but with such massive and terrible consequences. From a biblical perspective, pride is considered the original sin. "Hey, God, I prefer to do things my way, but I like to have you around as my divine fire extinguisher just in case. I'll call you if I need you."

For the front cover, I chose the central detail from Michael Angelo's *The Creation of Adam* as it illustrates God purposefully and energetically reaching out to humanity and the limp-wristed, apathetic response He often gets in return. I pray you will be encouraged to take a firm hold of God's hand. He will never [cannot] let you go.

Note: I cite Wikipedia as a general reference in some footnotes (a matter of expediency). Readers are encouraged to seek alternate resources for a more robust investigation of referenced topics.

If notable errors are found in this book (e.g., logical fallacies) or if you have suggestions for challenging questions to include in future editions, please contact the author at [**dohauthor@gmail.com**](mailto:dohauthor@gmail.com)

CHAPTER 2—THE GOD I KNOW

This afternoon, I went grocery shopping at the Freshco supermarket in Huntsville, Ontario. Knowing that I didn't have a 25-cent coin needed to release a shopping cart, just before I pulled into the parking lot, I said, "God, can you leave a shopping cart out for me? Please."

I could see through the car window that my cart was just inside the store's front entrance. It was slightly angled and dead centre of the front foyer—almost as if it was on display. There was an instinctive urgency to run and grab the cart before anyone else could. That instinctive urgency seems kind of silly now. If God had placed that cart there in response to my simple request, then there was no need for me to make a dash for it. There was no one else close by. I started pushing *my* cart around the store.

"Thanks, God."

One could argue that this was simple coincidence, someone leaving a cart behind, but when this kind of thing happens to one (me specifically) repeatedly and frequently, the Laws of Probability, Statistical Proof, and Very Large Numbers have a nullifying effect on the concept of coincidence. Someone famously observed, "The less I pray, the fewer 'coincidences' I experience."

Using the story of a shopping cart to start off a book about the attributes of God might seem frivolous—but for me the

provision of a shopping cart in answer to a seemingly trivial request is just another demonstration of God's affection towards me. Such is the character of the God I have had the joy and privilege of knowing for the past 36 years.

Do I always ask God for help in situations like this? Quite often, but, logically, not nearly as often as I could or should.

Does God provide every time? No. When I ask God for a parking spot, His answer is sometimes, "No, David, you need the walk." But more often than not, His answer is "Yes."

My family finds it all quite amusing. Jesus said,

"That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing. Look at the birds. They do not plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?"

Matthew 6:25-27 NLT

For the past several months, I have been dealing with the pain of sciatica in my right leg. An MRI revealed that the cause was a bulge in the bottom disk of my spine (ref. CHAPTER 23 to see an MRI image). The bulge presses against my sciatic nerve, causing muscle pain in my leg and cramping in my foot. I have sought medical help, have been receiving physiotherapy and chiropractic treatments, and have been the recipient of much prayer for healing. My chiropractor advised me that it should heal naturally, "...in about eight weeks to two years."

My condition seems to be improving slowly, but there is no indication of miraculous healing. Silence. If God can answer my request for the provision of a shopping cart simply so I can avoid the inconvenience of having to go to a cashier to ask for a 25-cent coin, surely He could touch my bulging disk and relieve me from all this discomfort.

Please join me on a journey of discovery as I endeavor to take a pragmatic, logical look at the attributes of God, asking the question, “If God, then... Then what?”

I surmise that the most frequently asked God question is, “If God is all-loving, why is there suffering and evil in this world?” As we mull over this and similar questions, should we not also take the time to consider all the other attributes of God?

God is not afraid of answering difficult questions.

From the outset, I also want to emphasize that this is not a book centered on *us vs. them*, theists vs. atheists (CHAPTER 14—THE COURT OF LAW excepted). No, this book focuses on logic, distinguishing between TRUE and FALSE, or incomplete logic; identifying and bypassing logical fallacies, assumptions and presumptions, circular arguments being held up as FACT (or even science), etc. We must reason through all the IF/THEN scenarios as we consider the person of God.

When considering the differences between theists and atheists, both must be held to the same standard.



"What is truth?" A painting by Nikolai Ge

CHAPTER 2—THE GOD I KNOW

CHAPTER 3—BELIEF, FAITH, KNOWLEDGE, AND CERTAINTY

Elves, tooth fairies, unicorns, flying spaghetti monsters, and even Santa Claus, are used by some as a rationale not to believe that God exists. Such examples of logical fallacy are called *The fallacy fallacy*¹².

One presumes that because a claim is poorly argued, or a fallacy introduced, the claim itself must be wrong. It is possible to make a false claim and yet argue with seemingly logical coherency for that claim, just as it is possible to make a valid claim and justify it with various fallacies and poor arguments.

Faith is a confident understanding of something we believe to be true.

Before we can assess the coherence of belief in God, it is crucial to clarify key definitions—particularly the differences between belief, faith, certainty, and knowledge. Similarly, we must distinguish between disbelief, faithlessness, uncertainty, ignorance, and even deception.

¹² Ref. Appendix 3—Logical Fallacies

Belief and faith are closely aligned. In simple terms, faith is a confident understanding of something we believe to be true. For example, I believe that the chair in front of my desk will support my weight should I sit on it. This *belief* is based on information provided by others (the manufacturer of the chair who provides documented specifications for the chair). *Faith* is acting on something I believe to be true. I exercised my faith the first time I sat on the chair in front of my desk. When I exercise my faith, I gain the *knowledge* that the chair in front of my desk can and will hold my weight. I found the manufacturer's specifications to be true. When I exercise my faith repeatedly, sitting in the same chair multiple times each day, for days on end, I gain *certainty*¹³ that the chair will always support my weight; that is, of course, unless the characteristics of the chair should change over time, i.e., wear out.

When a cynic, that is someone who has not made a thorough investigation of whether God exists, talks about Christians having *blind faith*, they are speaking from ignorance.

Blind faith is faith in something that has not been investigated, tested, or exercised. For example, if an odd-looking chair appeared in front of my desk and, without any investigation or inspection whatsoever, I sat on it, falling to the floor because the chair was made of painted Styrofoam—that would have been an exercise of blind faith. Not very smart.

On the other hand, a skeptic might say, "I'm not going to sit in that chair until you can prove to me, beyond any reasonable

¹³ Romans 6:5

doubt, that I am not going to end up on the floor.” Skepticism and cynicism are not at all the same thing, and skepticism is not inappropriate especially when one’s life is on the line.

The following is with much thanks to Nathaniel Givens¹⁴.

“Certainty is generally evidence-based. There is no evidence of the tooth fairy, but that doesn’t mean we’re neutral about the existence of tooth fairies. Based on the *lack* of evidence, we’re pretty confident they do not exist and why disbelief in tooth fairies is reasonable.

Let’s look at how *compossibility*¹⁵ can provide a solid rationale for the intuition that the tooth fairy doesn’t exist without requiring us to contradict the principle that *lack of evidence is not evidence of lack*.

Instead of a tooth fairy, I will go with the proposition that there’s an invisible unicorn in your backyard.

Now, should you have:

1. Belief – You think that there is a unicorn.
2. Non-Belief – You do not think that there is a unicorn.
3. Disbelief – You do not think that there is a unicorn, *and* you think that there is not a unicorn.

¹⁴ difficultrun.nathanielgivens.com/2015/01/15/god-and-the-tooth-fairy-belief-without-evidence/

¹⁵ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compossibility

Here's how compossibility comes to the rescue. A traditional unicorn [rather than a real-life unicorn¹⁶] is a horse with a horn on its head. Horses are large mammals. If you had a large mammal in your backyard, even if we concede it's invisible, it would still leave hoofprints and unicorn poo behind, and it would probably also be rather noisy. Do you see any hoofprints? Smell unicorn poo? Do you hear a large 4-legged beast walking around and breathing heavily? Nope? Then you don't just have a lack of evidence; you do, based on compossibility, have *evidence of a lack*. These things *should* be there, and they are not. Therefore, the invisible unicorn is not compossible with

I believe that...	I do not believe that...	I believe that not...
Belief	Non-Belief	Disbelief
I believe that God exists.	I do not believe that God exists. or I do not believe that God doesn't exist.	I believe that God does not exist.

the state of your backyard (e.g., free of unicorn poo)."

Let us go back to our tooth fairy for a moment. Many children believe in tooth fairies in their early childhood because of corrupted or planted evidence. The parent exchanged the

¹⁶ bbc.com/earth/story/20150521-meet-the-ten-real-life-unicorns

child's tooth for a treat of some kind and was informed, "The tooth fairy left it while you were asleep." Although done in love, this was a deception. The parent deceived the child into believing there are actual tooth fairies, and the child has not yet learned how or why things need to be rationally investigated.

Adults, and even experts, are not beyond being deceived either. The *Piltdown Man hoax*¹⁷ began in 1859 with the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*. If Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection was true, people correctly thought there should be fossils (transitional forms, or Last Common Ancestors) that connected apes to modern humans. The theorized connecting fossil became known as *the missing link*. The search for it became a race that overtook the 19th-century archaeological community. Because no one could find any evidence, some found it necessary to fabricate evidence because the *evidence of lack* was not compossible with Darwin's theory. British paleontologist Arthur Smith Woodward introduced the world to Piltdown Man. Many others followed in Woodward's steps¹⁸, notably Charles Dawson, responsible for 38 fake finds.

Jesus said, "He [the devil] was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

¹⁷ smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/how-to-solve-human-evolutions-greatest-hoax-167921335/

¹⁸ popularmechanics.com/science/archaeology/g3051/fake-fossils/

John 8:44

As recently as 2017, the BBC, in their series *Earth*, acknowledged a lack of evidence, “We have still not found the missing link between apes and us.”¹⁹ Others have pointed to the discovery of *Lucy*’s fossil remains in 1974 as the definitive transitional form, but even here, many are skeptical of interpretations made concerning Lucy²⁰.



¹⁹ [bbc.com/earth/story/20170517-we-have-still-not-found-the-missing-link-between-us-and-apes](https://www.bbc.com/earth/story/20170517-we-have-still-not-found-the-missing-link-between-us-and-apes)

²⁰ answersingenesis.org/human-evolution/lucy/a-look-at-lucys-legacy/

Image below: Lucy's skeletal²¹ remains and two [interpretive] reconstructions of her bones.^{22 23}

Faith is the belief in something based on evidence, e.g., by faith, we believe in the *Law of Gravity*; we cannot see gravity, but we can observe and depend on the effects of gravity. The observed effect of gravity is the evidence. Likewise, the Bible does not guide one to believe in God without reason.

In the story of *Doubting Thomas*, we see Thomas as a skeptic. Jesus did not rebuke Thomas for his skepticism. Jesus said, if you are looking for evidence, I will give it to you.

[Following Jesus death by crucifixion] *Thomas said to his fellow disciples, "Unless I see the nail marks in his [Jesus'] hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."*

John 20:25

Then we read,

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put

²¹ nytimes.com/2016/08/30/science/lucy-hominid-fossils-fall.html

²² answersingenesis.org/astronomy/extrasolar-planets/a-field-trip-to-an-evolving-planet/

²³ answersingenesis.org/about/press/stunning-exhibit-unveiled-at-creation-museum/

your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

John 20:26-27

Then, based on the evidence presented, this was Thomas' response.

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

John 20:28

A skeptic is someone who will not believe until there is sufficient and strong enough evidence to alleviate their skepticism. The question we must all eventually answer is: 'When God provides *strong enough evidence*, what do we do with that evidence?' Is it then fair for God to say that we are without excuse for not knowing Him?

In contrast, the cynic [denialist] is someone who will not believe even when presented with the evidence.

Jesus answered, "...In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

"What is truth?" retorted Pilate.

John 18:38-39

Then Pilate, the cynic, walked away.

An atheist may have a confident belief that there is no God yet has *nothing* on which to base that belief.

IF GOD, THEN... THE LOGICAL GOD

GOD

יהוה

YHWH, the Hebrew Name for God.

"In the beginning God..."

Genesis 1:1